

ALBERTA HISTORICAL REVIEW



SUMMER
1960

PIONEER ARRIVALS, 1893
(See Inside Cover)

- Edson-Grande Prairie Trail
- Modern History Museums
- Frog Lake Massacre
- John A. McDougall

Alberta Historical Review

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Cover illustration: The pioneers who came to Alberta travelled by many means—on foot, by cart, by wagon, by train. This party of travellers are using light covered wagons as they enter the southern Alberta prairie. Arriving in about 1893, they were typical of many who came from the northern states.

—Photo courtesy Glenbow Foundation

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On the Edson-Grande Prairie Trail

By

HARVEY A. SWITZER

Editor's Note: This article by Mr. Switzer has won first prize in the Pioneer Writing Competition of the Society.

During the year 1911 the Department of Interior decided to carry out an aggressive campaign to induce settlement in the great Peace River country. Heavy advertising was done in newspapers and periodicals, brochures distributed through boards of trade, and colonization agents placed in strategic spots in the central and northern United States and in the older settled parts of Canada. Furthermore, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway which was then pushing its trans-continental line westward had surveyed a branch line from Edson via what is now Whitecourt, northwesterly into Grande Prairie, and was advertising Edson, far and wide, as the "Gateway to the Last Great West". The government also commencing the cutting out of a colonization road from Edson to Grande Prairie, a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles.

The old route, over which a very few settlers had previously gone into the country, ran from Edmonton north to Athabasca Landing, then westerly along Lesser Slave Lake and on to Peace River Crossing and then south via Dunvegan. This was a distance of six hundred miles and practically impossible in the summer months. The great lure was free virgin land, or at least the government was willing to bet you a quarter section of it, one hundred and sixty acres, against your ten dollars that you could not live on it for three years. In addition you could increase your acreage by purchasing South African War Veteran's scrip and also Half Breed scrip on the open market and applying it to Crown Lands.

The writer, who only the previous summer had come out from old Ontario to Weyburn, Saskatchewan, as a young graduate pharmacist of only twenty-one summers, again felt the call of the West. Forming a partnership with a doctor, R. N. (Bob) Shaw and an Elmer Davidson—a well experienced man of many accomplishments, having been lumberman, farmer, thresherman, etc.—we entrained for Edmonton and arrived in Strathcona

late in February. We took the hotel bus, which was horse drawn, over the low level bridge and stayed at the Yale Hotel overnight. The next morning we took the G.T.P. train for Edson and had quite a slow trip out, as westward from Entwistle it was still in the hands of the construction department.

Arriving in Edson, we put up at the old Boston Hotel, where accommodation was rather primitive, the sleeping quarters consisting of one huge big room with a double row of single cots, about forty or more in all. Davidson went down to Bickerdike, eight miles further west, which was then the end of the steel, and a rip roaring, wide open frontier camp. This place later became the junction for the Alberta Coal Branch. There he purchased a sleigh and a team of huge oxen, and a dark red and the other blue and white, which he insisted was Paul Bunyan's "Blue Ox" of storied fame in the lumber woods of Michigan and Minnesota. In Edson, we secured a site for a small cache in which we left our trunks with such personal belongings as we did not wish to take on the trail. We gathered an outfit together, consisting of baled hay and grain for the oxen, a

small stove, food for ourselves, mostly staples, flour, beans, rice, baking powder, salt, sugar, tea and coffee and fat salt pork commonly called "sow belly", cooking utensils, and some medicines and first aid supplies and tools.

We left Edson on March 5th, 1911, being the first outfit to leave for Grande Prairie. Just as we were leaving, someone snapped a picture of us and we were more or less "immortalized" by the sale of thousands of post cards of the picture and it later became one of the illustrations in a book which was written by an Anglican missionary stationed at Edson. We had been assured by the local board of trade that although the trail was not quite all cut out, it undoubtedly would be by the time that we got up there and that we should encounter no particular difficulties.

We encountered many varied experiences on that trail, but space will permit of the setting down of only a few of them here. Travelling by ox team is a rather slow and tedious business, we usually walked except for the one driving and probably averaged not more than twenty miles a day. Each night we cooked up a meal, fed our oxen, cut spruce boughs to make a bed at the rear end of our sleigh, set a couple of poles up leaning on the sleigh, threw a tarpaulin over them to make an improvised tent and slept there for the night. The temperatures usually went down well towards zero during the night and sometimes even below so it was not too pleasant when we were not inured to it. Water for cooking was melted snow and that winter the rabbits were almost as thick as flies, with their trails criss crossing all over the woods. We would pick out what we fondly thought was some nice clean snow to melt for our coffee or other requirements, but when it was melted we found at least a few "rabbit berries" floating around on the top. We would then pitch it out and get some more but with the same results, so after a few trials, we stoically skimmed them off and used the water. The bread soon ran out and flapjacks and bannock took its place. Sometimes these did not turn out too well being somewhat under cooked and they would be facetiously referred to as "dough gods". However,

the cold bracing air and hard exercise gave us wonderful appetites so no one suffered or complained. Even the doctor, who on the start had been picking out the bits of fat from the good side bacon which we had then, was munching down the fat sow belly without a tremor.

Some forty odd miles out of Edson, where the high land makes its first break down to the benches of the Athabasca Valley we encountered a very steep declivity, later known as "Break Neck Hill". In order to negotiate this in safety we wrapped several log chains around the runners of our sleigh. We then chopped down a jackpine tree about thirty feet tall, cut off all the branches about fifteen inches from the trunk so that they would dig in well, and chained the top of it to the rear of our loaded sleigh so as to hold it back from over-running the oxen. We continued on across the Athabasca on the ice and on across the Little Smoky River.

A couple of days later we met the road foreman, Sides, who with his crew was hurrying back to Edson before the ice would go out, as there was as yet no ferry on the river. He assured us however that foreman Woodward was cutting through from the other end and that if we would camp at the end of the cutting when we reached it, we would have only a few days to wait as there were only a very few miles left to be cut. We learned later however, that Woodward with his crew was hurrying out just as fast in the other direction.

When we arrived at the end of the cutting, we found a Cree half-breed named Larocque and a North Carolinian school teacher who had purchased supplies from the camp and stayed behind and whom we promptly named "Sam McGee". We learned later that he had stayed around there for a few months panning some gold out of the streams and, going down to Edson with his samples, he had induced several citizens to put up money for a gold staking venture.

The next day an old sourdough of the trail of Ninety-Eight, pulled into our camp with a sleigh and team of small oxen. A day or two later three Americans arrived with two sleighs and a

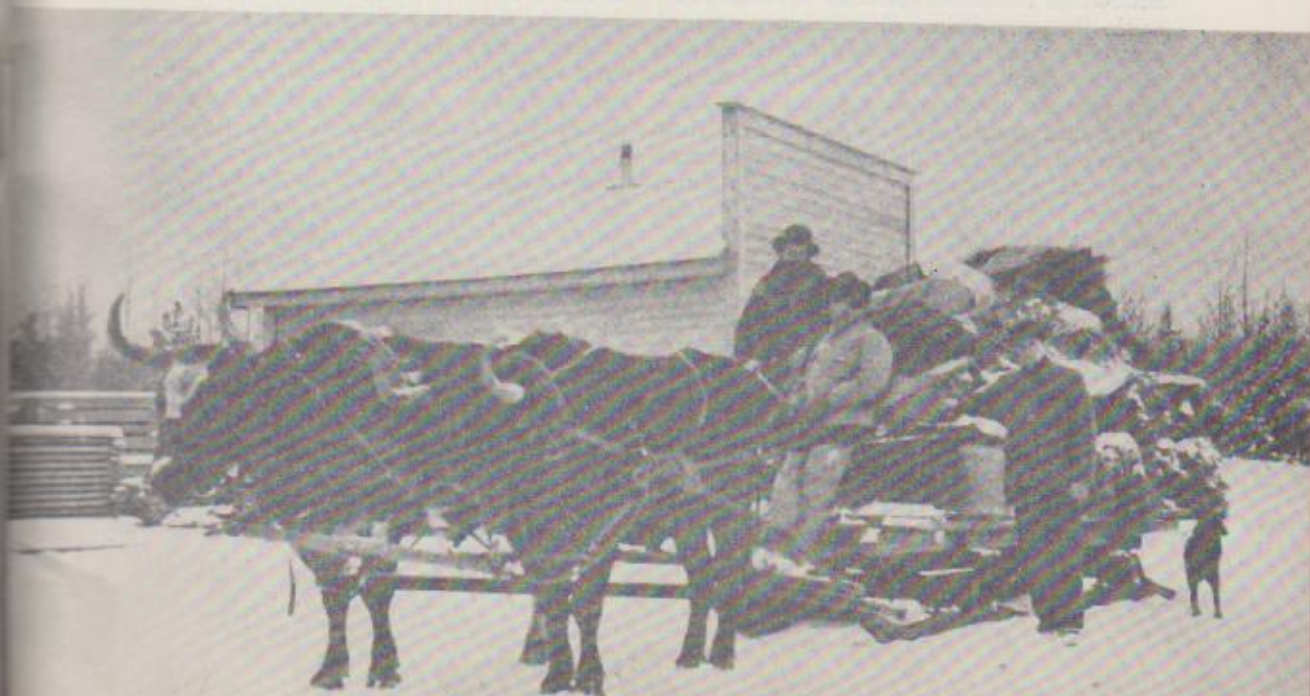
bunch of loose cayuses. They were from Montana, one being a sheepherder, one a cowboy and the other a very talkative gentleman of unknown talents and called B. S. Smith. Some of us hired Larocque to make a trip up to Sturgeon Lake to see if we could arrange to purchase hay for our livestock. At Sturgeon Lake the Hudson's Bay Company and Revillon Freres each maintained a trading post. There was also a Roman Catholic mission, school and church and numerous Indian log dwellings. He returned in about a week and reported that there was no hay at all to be had and further that there was about sixty miles of bush to cut through before we reached there. We did not believe him at the time, but found out later that it was too true.

Several more landseekers arrived within the next week with various outfits, and then the government road engineer, A. H. McQuarrie, arrived on the scene. He organized a government road crew of all those who were able and willing to cut trail. A cook sleigh was readied with a stove and supplies with a cook in charge. This sleigh also carried the workers' dunnage (or war bags) containing our blankets and a change of clothing. This sleigh kept right along with us as we progressed, served our midday meal and supper where we halted for the night. Along at this point we worked through a belt of very heavy snow, there being more than five feet in

the sheltered woods. This being now late in March, the snow was fairly soft, although crusted on top by the bright sunshine, and each step we took it would support our foot until we really put our weight on it, when down we would sink, so that every night we were soaked to the skin. After eating we built huge camp fires, stripped to the skin, put on dry clothing from our bags and after drying our wet clothing, rolled it in our bags for a change next night. We then rolled up in our blankets spread on a bed of spruce boughs and slept soundly until we heard the cook's call early next morning. The rest of the landseekers followed us at their leisure with the animals and outfits. This same routine went on day after day. We picked up the dog sled trail from Lac Ste. Ann to Sturgeon Lake and followed it for many miles. This ran along the westerly side of House River (Waskahigan being the Indian name) across numerous very deep ravines where the creeks ran down to the river, but early in the summer the route was resurveyed and changed to the east side of the river where the terrain was much flatter.

Several amusing incidents occurred during the cutting operations. There was

Setting out on the Edson-Grande Prairie trail, the author and his party had their sleigh piled high with belongings. Left to right are Harvey Switzer, Dr. R. Shaw and E. Davidson. Theirs was the first outfit to leave for Grande Prairie. This photo was taken in Edson in 1911.



no large timber, most of the trees being poplar, with the largest probably six or eight inches. Nevertheless we would more or less continuously hear the cry of "timber!" ring out on the clear air. One of the party had a dollar watch which stopped every few hours, and several times each day he would draw it from his pocket, look at it intently and shout: "What time is it?". One night while drying out our clothing one of the party had built his fire at the base of a spruce tree which was covered with a considerable amount of gum, and hung his pants to dry from a branch. When the fire got going well the spruce gum caught alight, the fire went up the tree with a roar and the pants bellied out like a balloon. Later the owner was seen raking among the ashes and leaves to recover the pocket knife, coins, etc., which had been in the pockets.

When we finally won through to the end of the old cutting, several miles south of Sturgeon Lake, the crew was disbanded. It was now well on into April and as none of the outfits had sufficient fodder along with them, many of the animals had died enroute. Most of those which survived, except those able to travel, were driven onto the flats of the Little Smoky where there was considerable frozen grass, filling but not very nourishing. We had lost our blue ox and put the red ox on the river with the others.

We built a cache of poplar logs and placed in it our sleigh and all our gear, with the exception of what we would carry on our backs for the rest of the journey. This included our blankets, frying pan, tin plate and cup, cutlery, some grub and a hand axe. About the time we were ready to start off, along came a spanking team of horses with John Stocks, Deputy Minister of Public Works, Jim Cornwall, "The Apostle of the North" and Road Engineer MacQuarrie. The team was driven by a young man named Robertson, then an engineer in the department, later, I believe becoming deputy minister. They were on an inspection trip of the new road.

We caught up with them that night at Sturgeon Lake and visited with them in the home of the Factor of the Hudson's Bay trading post, Jim Cornwall, who

knew that country like the palm of his hand, and who spoke Cree fluently, bargained with the senior Indian Chief, "Red Moose", for the only hay in Sturgeon Lake, five bales. In order to get it, however, he had to hire Red Moose as a guide to take them over to the Big Smoky River. He said later that they did not need a guide any more than a wagon needs a fifth wheel but they did need the hay.

The next morning they set out with their team and wagon. There had as yet been no trail cut through, but the country was fairly open, a great deal of it having been burnt over and there was a lot of beaver meadow country. For mile after mile we followed beaver meadows, crossing over narrow timbered ridges from one to another. There must have been hundreds of thousands of beaver taken out of that country in the early days.

We followed their trail all day long and arrived late at night on the Simmonette River, where we stopped near an Indian encampment. There, in spite of barking dogs and noises typical of an Indian village, we slept soundly, until late the next morning, being tired out from our hard hike of the previous day. We again followed the wagon trail and early in the afternoon reached the brow of the Big Smoky valley near Bezanson. We found that the party had already been down to the river, Cornwall had crossed over on the ice and back again, but by the time they reached the top of the valley the ice had already broken and was running in the stream. As there was no way of crossing there, we went downstream a couple of miles to where the two Goodwin brothers had a camp, afterwards known as "Goodwin's Crossing". We stayed with them a couple of days until the ice running in the river thinned out somewhat, when they took us across in a row boat.

We again took up our trail for the "Meca" of Grande Prairie. After ascending the western banks of the Big Smoky valley, the land levelled out but all around the outer edge was bush and scrub, gradually thinning out towards the centre, with various sized patches of scrub giving the country a park-like

appearance, while the very central part of the prairie was pretty well bare of scrub, except for a little along the water courses. This was now well along in April and the snow was melting fast. All one morning we slogged through water up to our ankles and at times to our knees through what was known as the Red Willow Flats. This was in later years all drained off into the Smoky as a government project and the land all settled. That evening we reached Bear Creek, where a man by the name of Bredin had a "stopping place". This later became the site of Grand Prairie City. The next day we hiked over to the trading post at Lake Saskatoon, at the west end of the lake, where there was quite a little village. Outside of this place there were very few people in the whole Grande Prairie country, just a comparatively few settlers who had come in a few years before by the long trail. A few around Bear Lake, a few over at Beaverlodge and Red Willow and two or three at Buffalo Lakes were about all.

The next morning we replenished our grub supply and started out looking for suitable land on which to file. We spent approximately the next week running cut lines, taking the section numbers from the iron survey stakes in the corner mounds of quarters that took our fancy. We slept out on the prairie at night and sometimes it was pretty cold, it being late in April. We would awaken with the sun in the morning and the white hoar frost covering the blankets all around our heads.

To show that we chose wisely in the selection of land, it was mostly all in the area in which the town of Sexsmith was later established and which became the largest primary grain shipping point in the British Empire. Some weeks later when the land rush developed in earnest, the government established a Sub-Land Office, but at that time the closest place at which we could file homestead entries was Grouard at the west end of Lesser Slave Lake, some seventy-five miles north of Sturgeon Lake. So we headed back for Sturgeon Lake and from there took the winter trail for Grouard. The first day out we met another man on a similar errand who then travelled



The final cutting operations on the Edson-Grande Prairie trail in 1911 were supervised by a government crew. Here, J. D. Robertson and A. H. McQuarrie, from the Department of Public Works, and James Cornwall, right, member of the Legislature, are camped on the trail in April.

along with us. When we got to the Little Smoky River crossing, we found it in full flood, with the swollen waters running almost to the top of its banks. There was a dugout which travellers used, but it was on the opposite shore. So we went to work with our hand axe and cut logs from a pile of driftwood, lashed them together with the ropes from our packs, cut out two steering paddles, loaded our packs on the raft and started across. The doctor, being inexperienced, headed the raft downstream for the opposite bank, so it was a little while before I could exert my own paddle enough to swing us upstream so that the current carried us over, albeit a distance downstream. We made camp there for the night and very early the next morning we awakened with rain coming down on us. We got up before our blankets got too wet, cooked breakfast and started off. The rain continued more or less all day and it was not long before the water was trickling off the bottom of our packs and down our legs. Just at evening we arrived at

West Prairie River opposite a homesteader's log shack, and found a small boat there. As it would not hold us all and our packs, we had to make two trips. The doctor was in the first load and having the paddle did the same as with the raft, so it was almost a half mile downstream before he reached the other side, then the boat had to be pulled laboriously upstream again by means of a rope. We were pretty well played out when we were all finally across and soaked through. The new Indian moccasins which I had donned that morning were worn right through.

The homesteader was very hospitable so we were able to have a hot meal, get dried out and have a good sleep where it was dry and warm. The next morning we set off for Grouard where we filed on our land, and set off on our return journey to Sturgeon Lake, where we arrived in good time.

As I stated previously, Davidson was a well experienced man and the road engineer had arranged for him to be foreman of a road gang when we returned. So we then started south to where we had cached our belongings. Davidson began hiring some men from the settlers coming up the trail, some of whom were willing to work for a few weeks before continuing on their way. I was taken on as cook, it being the best paying job next to that of the foreman. We recovered our big red ox and he bought two more teams to work, oxen being much more suitable than horses for the work we had to do. There was none of today's heavy road machinery. We had a plough, a slip scraper, shovels, axes and grub hoes. We did ditching, laid corduroy, built small bridges and on very steep hills did some side hill grading.

Our food was good but simple and not too much variety. We drew our supplies from the trading post and there were no tinned fruits, fresh vegetables or other luxuries. We had tinned jam, butter in two pound tins, dried fruits in 25 pound wooden boxes, desicated vegetables in five and seven pound sealed tins and other staples. Prices were very high, but of course freight was seven cents a pound, which had to be added to everything. Trade flour was \$12 per cwt., high

patent flour bought from incoming settlers brought \$16, sugar was \$20 per cwt., beans \$24 for 120 pound bag and salt pork \$40. We augmented our salt pork with the odd rabbit or wild chicken, as well as dried moose meat and bear meat from the Indians. At rare times we were able to buy fresh moose meat from the Indians, but it would always be bony front quarter meat, as they dried the better cuts. Once we were able to buy two sacks of potatoes, which was all the fresh vegetables we had all summer. One day, one of the crew shot a year old bear which was a welcome change in our diet.

Our crew varied from seven or eight men to a high of twenty-seven. Dr. Shaw worked on the crew for a short time and then he relieved the factor of Revillon Freres trading post, who went out on a holiday. During the summer we worked at several locations from our starting point right through to the west bank of the Big Smoky and part way back again. When we moved camp, we loaded everything on the wagon, hooked the oxen up two and two with the big red ox on the lead, and I drove them to our next camp.

Situated as we were, we had a ring-side seat on the great tide of land seekers flowing into the country. There were people from every part of Canada and the United States and from every walk of life—farmers, ranchers, laborers, school teachers, doctors and lawyers. And the outfits were just as varied. One man might have nothing but his pack, another a single wagon drawn by horses or oxen, and another outfit would consist of several wagons loaded with farm machinery and supplies of all kinds. One party we remembered particularly consisted of two school teachers married to two school teachers, quite young couples, having come from the city of Vancouver.

The trail was hard and wearisome and for some almost heartbreaking. Wagons would become bogged down in the mud, mosquitoes in swarms worried both man and beast, and for a period of six weeks it rained at some time in the day, every day. But all were imbued with the hope of a new home in

a new land and pressed on in spite of all hardships.

With freeze up, about the end of October, road work ceased and camp was broken up. About this time we dissolved our partnership. Dr. Shaw became dissatisfied, and Davidson, although not saying anything, was not too happy about the way some things were working out, so we got together and made a final settlement of our mutual affairs. Dr. Shaw stayed in Grande Prairie where he practiced medicine and later at Sexsmith until his untimely death. Elmer Davidson stayed in the country and started a cattle ranch at Watino where the railway crosses the Big Smoky and was quite successful.

The author was passed on the trail by the government party but caught up with them at Sturgeon Lake where they bartered with the Indians for hay. In this group at the lake are John Stocks, deputy minister of public works, at left, and A. H. McQuarrie, centre.



Early in the fall, one of my brothers had joined our crew, and when camp broke up, we decided to take a trip around the prairie before going back to Edson, as we planned to visit relatives in B.C. over Christmas. So we started off and took another look at the land on which we had filed, one of the quarters being in his name. Game birds were very plentiful. The prairie chickens were gathering into flocks for the fall, and we often saw flocks of two or three hundred birds. There were hundreds of geese and literally thousands of ducks. At one place, known as the "Twin Lakes," (one of these now being at Clairmont and the other fairly well dried up) ducks and geese were constantly flying in huge flocks from one lake to the other. However, the greatest wonder to me was the way the prairie had been settled in that one summer. In the spring the whole prairie was open and unsettled and in the fall it was dotted in every direction with log shacks and little pieces of breaking. I also found that during the summer a new town, Grande Prairie City, had been staked out although there was not as yet a single building erected on the site. I had to go over to Lake Saskatoon to visit the bank, so I went by myself and stayed overnight. I left there early the next morning and took a short cut across the lake which was then frozen over solid. When I was well out on the ice I heard from the direction of some bush on the one shore the most unearthly sounds that I had ever heard. I thought that all the devils in hell had been let loose and my heart flopped over a couple of times and almost stopped. However I soon recovered when a band of five coyotes trotted out on to the ice, they having been responsible for all the noise. I joined my brother at Bear Creek and we started on our return journey to Edson.

By this time a number of "Stopping Places" had been established along the trail. These were usually situated near a stream to assure a water supply. The owner supplied a fairly large room furnished with a cook stove, a table or two and a few benches. For a small fee one could use the facilities, cooking their own food, or could buy a meal for themselves and also for their animals if

needed. They were usually designated by the mileage from Edson, or the name of the party who operated it, and sometimes by both.

At Sturgeon Lake we met up with three other men who were returning to Edson on foot and travelled with them. The longest stretch at that time on which there were no stopping places was from Sturgeon Lake to Tony river, a distance of seventy-five or eighty miles. The first night out we made camp at Moose Creek. the weather had turned bitterly cold going down to 35° below zero, so we spent a very uncomfortable night. We built up a huge fire and one of us took turns at keeping it burning throughout the night. The following night we camped in fairly open poplar country near House River, but the temperature had risen some and we did not fare too badly. The next day, at around two o'clock, we arrived on the hillside above the Tony River stopping place. We cooked up all the remainder of our grub and lazed around camp for the afternoon. We planned that we would buy our supper there and stay for the night. Around five o'clock we walked down to the stopping place and found the wife and children of the owner who told us that she could not possibly feed us as her husband had gone down to Edson for supplies and as she was not sure when he would return she could not spare a bit of food of any kind.

The next stopping place was at Little Smoky River about twelve miles further on, so there was nothing else to do but head for there. It was past six by the time we got started and darkness would be coming very soon. The last few miles the trail wound through a big spruce

swamp with trees about twenty or twenty-five feet high, which made it pretty dark on the narrow trail. It had been cut through the previous winter when snow was on the ground so the stumps were quite high and on these we stubbed our moccasin clad toes as we struggled along. We reached the stopping place which was run by two men, about 9:30 p.m. They had shot a moose that day and soon had steaks frying on the stove. Never in our lives had we smelled anything so absolutely delicious and we did full justice to them.

The next night we stopped at Mile 35, the Scotchman's Place. Here we arranged with a man who was returning to Edson with a team and empty sleigh to take our packs so that we could travel light. We were in top notch physical condition and could walk four miles an hour for hour after hour. We arrived at Mile 20, the Frenchman's, about 11:30 a.m. but had to wait for dinner to be gotten ready, so that it was 1:00 p.m. before we got away, and we made Edson at about 5:15 p.m., tired but happy.

We then took the train for Revelstoke, B.C. where we visited with relatives over Christmas. Right after New Year's, I returned alone to Edson, my brother remaining behind. After several adventures, which could form the basis for another story, I decided not to return to Grande Prairie but located at Edson. I opened a drug store there in January, 1912, which I have operated continuously since that time. On occasion when meeting old timers in town or in the Peace River country, the Edson-Grande Prairie Trail furnishes food for many reminiscences of those bygone days.

POLICE PATROL

"Cpl. Lauder and a detachment of 10 men returned from a scouting expedition on the 26th. They had been as far as Milk River in search of a band of American whiskey traders who had been trading with our Indians, but did not succeed in finding either whiskey, traders or Indians."

—Fort Macleod Gazette, Sept. 4, 1882

An Opinion of **The Frog Lake Massacre**

By
REV. DR. EDWARD AHENAKEW

with foreward by
ALEX. E. PETERSON

A Cree Indian well known in the religious and educational life of western Canada, and an outstanding figure in the Anglican church is the Rev. Dr. Edward Ahenakew. Born in 1885 on the Sandy Lake Reserve near Prince Albert, Sask., he attended the local day school there. At the age of eleven he was admitted to the Prince Albert Boarding School where he completed his high school training with distinction. After two years study at Wycliffe College, Toronto, he returned west to complete his course in theology at Emmanuel College, Saskatoon, graduating in 1910 with the degree of L.Th. It is interesting to note here that Dr. W. Everard Edmonds, for many years President of the Historical Society of Alberta, and past Editor of this magazine, was at this time a professor at Emmanuel, and one of Mr. Ahenakew's teachers. Following his ordination to the priesthood, Rev. Ahenakew was appointed a travelling missionary to many scattered Indian and white settlements in northern Saskatchewan.

In his travels he found the general health and living conditions of his people deplorable and to assist in alleviating these conditions he felt that a knowledge of medicine was essential to his work. To this end, and with a view to obtaining his M.D. degree, he entered the University of Alberta as a student in the Faculty of Medicine. Unfortunately, ill health prevented him from completing the course and so at the end of the third year, he returned to the mission field.

In 1923 he was appointed General Indian Missionary, Diocese of Saskatchewan, but his ability as a preacher also took him to many other parts of Canada. In collaboration with Archdeacon Faries he edited a Cree dictionary and for over thirty years published, in syllabics, the Cree Monthly Guide. In recognition of his outstanding services to the church and the Indians of Canada, Emmanuel College in 1947 conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Now, at the age of 75, and after almost fifty years as an active clergyman and student missionary, he is living in semi-retirement at Port a-la-Corne, Sask.

The Frog Lake Indian Mission came under the jurisdiction of Dr. Ahenakew, and in my position as the reserve overseer and day school teacher, it was my pleasure to know and work with him for close to twenty years. During this time I found him to be a most faithful and dedicated worker in the cause of Christianity. In all matters pertaining to the general well-being of his people he was always to the fore, and he never lost an opportunity to speak on their behalf.

One such opportunity came in June 1931 at the Frog Lake massacre grounds, where a memorial was unveiled in honor of those killed there in the Riel Rebellion of 1885. Present at this ceremony, in addition to Dr. Ahenakew, were Judge Howay of New Westminster, Professor Morton of the University of Saskatchewan, W. B. Cameron, the lone white man to survive the massacre, and several hundred Indian and white people who came to pay their respects. The program in addition to the many excellent speeches, included sporting events and a sing-song. Appropriate to the occasion, my class of Indian school children sang, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus," and "Jesus Loves Me This I Know."

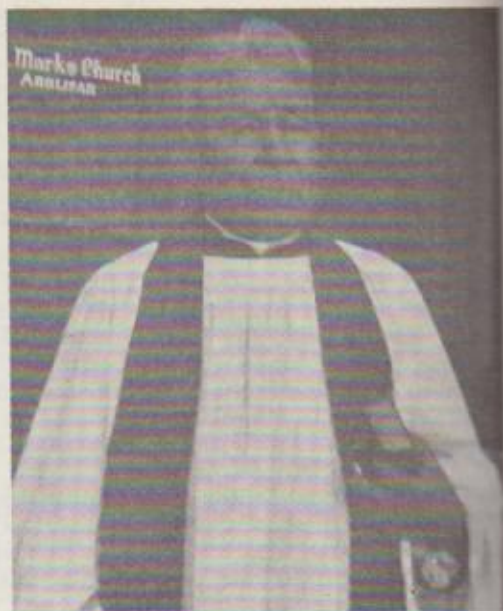
But the highlight of this memorable event was the address of Dr. Ahenakew, published here for the first time. This remarkable and thought-provoking address sets out the Indians' defence against the generally accepted causes which led to this painful episode in our history. Standing upon a rock overlooking the site of that awful deed, he interpreted, in no uncertain manner, the Indian mind. His forceful but sincere speech left a deep impression on everyone present, many of whom had come long distances to commemorate this tragic event.

—Alex E. Peterson.

The story of the 1885 massacre of the white men at Frog Lake is not so far removed from the past as to make it impossible for one to obtain an authentic account of what really did happen on that unfortunate day. Many are still alive who were present and were eye-witnesses of the happening. Some, of course, may have done a little more than merely look on, but that need not be pried into unnecessarily at this late date, since the government undertook at that time a most thorough investigation, and the Indians who took active part were all brought to judgment.

It is true the Indian versions of the story vary somewhat as to detail, but it is only natural that this should be so, since the events happened so quickly and not all at the same place; besides, excitement was so intense that much is liable to have escaped the notice of some men. After carefully listening to different eye-witnesses among the Indians, putting what they told together, eradicating all that does not seem to fit in with the most probable and true line of the story, making due allowance for any natural accretions, I feel that I have a very reliable account of the event as it is remembered by the Indians.

Often when I drive through the place of massacre and see the eight mounds with their black iron crosses, marking the place of repose of those killed on that unfortunate day, I feel sorry that such a thing did ever happen. But, because I know the Crees, I do not put it down to mere blood-thirstiness. I know that, in his own way of thinking, the Indian man felt himself provoked to it. He had been used to shooting his hereditary enemy, the Blackfoot, at sight, because if he did not, he would get a bullet himself. The feud had been between the two ever since nobody knows when, but anyone who was not an enemy was ordinarily safe with him. Despite the fact that there was no law, there had been very few murders committed among the Crees, so few that with them the Eighth Commandment was almost unnecessary. So while I allow that the massacre is a sad blot on our history and I certainly am not aiming to justify it, I feel that I should mention what extenuating circumstances there may have been.



Rev. Edward Ahenakew has long been known as a qualified and sympathetic speaker on behalf of his people. He is seen here in front of his church in 1957.

So, as I drive past, I think about the events of 1885 at Frog Lake, I think of the blood that was shed, not in cold murder, but in the heat of a great excitement. I imagine that I can see that great camp, hear the tom-tom of the drums at a dance at night which lasts till morning and then the fatal shots! The sun certainly rose on a sad spectacle!

"You ask me," replied a step-son of Big Bear to my questions. "I will tell you. It might never have happened had it not been for some of our band from the southern plains. Blood was spilled and it darkened the sod of the Frog Lake Reserve, and Christianity only can ever heal the wound made."

Imagine a people, who had lived and roamed over this great northwestern land, breathing in the freedom of the prairie at every breath, their will never called into question, kept within bounds only by the teaching and exhortations of the old men of the nation, knowing most exactly the ways of the country, skill-

ful in all things pertaining to the making of a livelihood, conquering the necessarily hard conditions under which they lived, feeling manhood that coursed through their physical bodies; such a people must love freedom as their God-given animal, the noble bison, did. They must resent anything that tended to bring that freedom to nought, or even to restrict it. It is only nature—it were unnatural if it were not so.

Here we will digress and consider the Hudson's Bay Co. during their regime. They knew the Indian. It was to their own interest to be respected by the various bands and at the same time to be friendly with them. They took a rough paternal interest in them and they kept good order and as far as it was possible peace, for a long time. Today they are respected and liked by the Indians.

Then the Government of Canada took hold of the West. It made treaties with the Indians whereby the latter gave up the whole land with the exception of tracts here and there that were reserved and wherein they could settle down and become farmers. That may sound easy enough, but for a people who had been nomadic for goodness only knows how many thousands of years to settle down to an agricultural life meant the complete reversal of those habits which had been bred into them by their former modes of life. Also remember that in those days, farming meant something different from what it does today. There were no towns or railroads; there was not much equipment. There were no houses to speak of apart from those in the few settlements. It is easy to see that the Indian would be discontented and look back with longing eyes to the days when everything came readily to his hand, and that feeling would be lodged within him awaiting to be brought to a head by anything provocative that was liable to happen.

Then again, although there were not so many actually dissenting voices worthy of notice, many were not in agreement with the treaty made with the Crown. The righteousness or otherwise of this I am not discussing, I am merely putting things down as they appeared to the untrained mind of the

Indian of those days. It is said that the liberal distribution of money and the consequent easy buying of so many things in the Hudson's Bay Co. posts made such a pleasing impression on the people that even the feelings of the dissenters were temporarily mollified.

In any case, they failed at the time to realize what signing over the land was to mean in the future. They did not think that it would have an adverse psychological effect on them. They did not know that they were totally unfitted by previous habits for a settled agricultural life. How were they to realize that it meant the continued application of mind and body to their work if they were to succeed, and that such a life would be just a reverse to their previous one. They did not realize that there was henceforth to be a definite systematized code of laws which would act like a fence around their spirits, within certain limits. Though they were a tolerably good-living people, they felt this unusual limitation and they resented it.

As years went by they felt this ever-tightening hold of the law. And, as the government kept pulling in the reins of control, the Indians began to realize many things not anticipated when the treaty was made.

It was not only the laws that were seemingly limiting their freedom; white people were coming in and introducing other customs and modes. The moral force of a superior civilization was steadily but surely asserting itself and easily pushing aside their own ways of life. They began to see that, in their own native land, where their will had always been law, that they were slowly becoming just a race of on-lookers. The day was surely dawning when they would be ignored altogether and would have to sit as silent as their women folk did in the councils of men.

The times were hard even though the government helped much; the buffalo were disappearing and somehow this circumstance linked itself, in the Indian mind, with the advent of the white man.

I, being an Indian, can understand all this. I do not say that the Indian was

justified in these feelings, but I do say, that for an uncivilized race to be put through similar experiences, it was according to nature that he should feel resentment. What people, unless totally devoid of spirit, would not feel a certain amount of regret and chagrin in such a situation? What people, unless previously slavish for a thousand years would not feel like blaming the white people who were indirectly responsible for it all? The agreement had been made in due form and order and there was much justice on the part of the government, but for all that, the consequent feelings of the Indians were inevitable.

To me, the massacre at Frog Lake came in the natural course of events. The eight mounds at Frog Lake are an evidence of the last attempt of the Indian to register his disapproval of the ever-increasing power of another race in the land. Such events were necessary in order that into the Indian mind might be instilled that respect which is due to the sovereign of England and the higher order of life he represents. Let me make myself plain. I am anxious that the Indian be given justice in connection with that fell deed which so startled Canada and which today looks like an old-time curse upon one of our reserves. I write because I feel it is up to me to speak for my race, when they are obliged, through lack of education, to sit like a dumb nation, while opinions concerning them are being formed throughout the country. Those opinions are very often the product of startling magazine writers and

of others more literally gifted but who see only the surface part of Indian life.

You, who are of the Anglo Saxon race, who have never called any nation "Master", and who since the days of William of Normandy have never had other manners and customs supersede yours—you do not know the feeling of our race. We, too, loved our ways, humble though they were. We, too, liked to run the affairs of our own land, though we ran them but poorly. We too, loved our freedom. Can you conscientiously blame the feelings which those uneducated Indians, fresh from the prairie, entertained in those early days? I know now that it was to our ultimate welfare that you took over our land, and that by rights we should have gone down on our knees and thanked you for doing so. Likewise, it was to the welfare of England that the Normans came. But did the Saxons drop on their knees to thank them? They certainly did not and I venture to say that you would not be the people you are now, had they done so. Rightly conscious of your knowledge and civilization, sometimes you are not able to see why other people do not readily accede to dropping their former life in order to take yours. That love of freedom which has flowered forth so splendidly in your national life is to be

Trading at Fort Pitt in 1884, some of these Crees were later involved in the Frog Lake massacre. Left to right are Four Sky Thunder, Sky Wind, Napasis and Big Bear, while seated is Matoose.



found in the breasts of humbler peoples, and they love it equally as did your forefathers in the days of the Norman, William.

"But the Indians *have* freedom," perhaps you think. That may be true, but ask yourself this question: "Was the Indian, not so much as he is now, but as he was then, in a position to recognize and to appreciate your (what may be called) most complex and highly systematized freedom?" The best and highest exhibition of freedom, seen through ignorant eyes may look like something else. The Normans introduced good into England—better than there was in the country before—but the Saxons failed to appreciate them. They wanted their own ways and it was natural that they should. Nations, like individuals, do not always take readily to those things that are best for them and the Indians of 1885 were no exception to this rule. The unconscious feeling of discontent was in their hearts. It is because of inability on my part if I have failed to show the fundamental reason for the participation of some of the Crees in the rebellion of 1885.

The massacre at Frog Lake was only a part of the rebellion, an incident in it. In those days Frog Lake was in a comparatively flourishing condition, I have been told. The Indian Agency and the Hudson's Bay Co. were there and a mill was in the course of construction some two miles west. All these are now gone, the only relics being the old cellar-holes, more or less covered with vegetation,

burnt pieces of brick and logs, and a ponderous wheel which was said to have been a part of the mill machinery.

The chief of the reserve at the time was *Chas-cha-kis-kwas*, whose son was *Nepowehao*, a chief who died some years ago. He was a Bush Indian as were many of his band. They were a quiet, friendly and peaceable people. At this time, however, there were five bands altogether, each under its own chief, encamped at Frog Lake. The prairie Crees, from the south, under their noted chief, Big Bear, were there. They were fresh from the prairie, long used to bloodshed and brought up from their childhood to look upon warfare as the highest occupation. This was natural, since they were in constant touch with the Blackfeet and the Bloods. Their feud with these people, which entailed shooting to kill at sight, had eliminated all ideas of chivalry from warfare. When they went out to kill, they killed without much ceremony, and in the most convenient and practical way that presented itself to them at the moment.

The rest of the Indians, those who had always lived in close proximity to the Hudson's Bay forts were, in character, something halfway between these and the peace-loving Bush Indians. Such were the Indians who were in the en-

All of these men were directly affected by the Frog Lake massacre. Left is Thomas Quinn, the Indian agent who was killed; Capt. Francis Dickens, N.W.M.P., forced to abandon Fort Pitt; James K. Simpson, H.B.C. factor at Frog Lake; his nephew Stanley Simpson and Angus McKay.



campment at Frog Lake in the winter of '84 and '85.

Now I will briefly enumerate the causes of the massacre. I have already mentioned the half-conscious feeling of discontent and resentment. This was the foundation of all. At this place, chance had brought many Indians together and they were finding it very difficult to secure enough food; they were stirred up by rumors of a possible uprising of the half-breeds who did all they could to enlist the Indians' sympathy. What made possible the massacre here, as an immediate cause, was a dislike some of the Indians had for some of the white men in the settlement. One or two of the men, especially, had a grudge which, however, they had kept to themselves, because a personal quarrel was a dangerous thing in Indian life. It always meant, not a bleeding nose or a black eye as in white life, but death to one or both unless the men who fought were overpowered by others and persuaded to desist. For this reason, the Indians had kept quiet and white people concerned must have thought that all was right and that the Indians were friendly.

The reasons for the bad feeling entertained by some of these individual Indians I need not mention at this late date. It is enough to say that there was some slight reason for trouble at this particular point. I do not say that anything would ever have happened, because of these things, had there not been the spirit of unrest that prevailed throughout the West; but even seeming insults sustained become intensified at moments of great popular excitement. Such was the case that night preceding the morning of the massacre.

A message had come from Fort Pitt in a letter to the Indian that the rebellion had broken out at Duck Lake and advised them to remain quietly together and they would receive rations of food. *Aymisees*, son of Big Bear, advised that the chiefs of Onion Lake, Keheewin, and Long Lake should be sent for to attend a council meeting where the advisability of staying out of the trouble could be discussed quietly. So far all was good.



Big Bear, chief of the Crees, was unable to restrain his warriors during the Frog Lake massacre and later battles with the Alberta Field Force.

Big Bear has been greatly blamed for all the happenings of 1885 in these parts. After hearing the stories told and thinking over them carefully I have come to the conclusion that he was not responsible for the massacre. It was true he was chief, but when you come to consider that, as such, he was only the leading man with no actually stated powers, you can imagine how easy it was for any reckless spirits to go against his wishes in a time of excitement. At the first shot, standing near the door of the Hudson's Bay Co. store, he gave a loud yell to stop the deed, but it was too late! The Indians were past obeying any voice.

The day before the massacre, all was quiet. There were preparations for a feast and a dance. Nobody knew that within a few hours there would be trouble. Still there seemed to be an unnatural hush, as if in anticipation of something. Dogs howled every now and again as if they sensed something. The spirit of unrest that was in the West had infected the Indians. They talked about the rebellion. The feast and

the dance was held. It was not a war dance, but with so many Indians congregated together, recklessness began to show itself among the young men. Some men have told me they felt the general excitement and restlessness that prevailed. Towards midnight things began to look alarming.

The first act of hostility was the taking of a horse belonging to one of the white men by an Indian. By this time the young men were feeling reckless enough to do anything. Some rode to the mill further west and brought in all the white men from there. Mounted as they were they hurried back to camp at full speed and this had the additional effect of exciting the people. By now it was daylight. All walked to and fro. The more responsible Indians gave advice to the white men, but it was not taken. From the Agency six white people were walking across the yard. The agent would not go. Wandering Spirit whose wife was the sister of the Indian Agent's wife, advised the agent to go, presumably in hopes of saving him. The agent was a determined man. Wandering Spirit seeing his good intentions frustrated, repeated his advice. Still the agent remained obdurate. "Once more" said Wandering Spirit, "I ask you to go." Still the agent would not. "Die then," said Wandering Spirit, shooting him dead. The shot had the effect one would naturally expect it to have under the circumstances. The mob spirit took hold and the slaughter began. The white men tried to escape but were shot down as

they were overtaken. All was over in a short time. The only white man to escape death was taken prisoner. Two white women were also made captive but given fair treatment.

It was sad for the killed. It was sadder for the slayers. Everything seemed to conspire towards the bringing about of the deed. Had the white men exercised more tact in their dealings with the Indians as did the old Hudson's Bay Co. men before them, the Indians would have been friendly and the deed might never have taken place. The cumulative force of everything that came into touch with the Indians at this time seemed to have worked towards some such thing.

The deed was done, never to be undone. Murder was committed and human blood unlawfully shed on Frog Lake soil, and as the Indian said, "The curse can never be lifted except by the power of Christianity." The reserve, once full of promise, has never made much progress. Only within recent years has a school been opened in it. A church was built by the Anglican church a few years ago.

It is to be hoped that as time goes on, the seeming misfortune that has lain, as a pall, over this place, may gradually be removed and that a time will come when the sin that took place in 1885 will have been purged and the people be free to go on with other reserves, in the slow but steady progress they are making towards better things.

WINTER FEED

"When W. Cust of St. Albert rounded up his cattle last fall to yard and stable them for the winter, he was fourteen head short. About two weeks ago after the cold snap, a cow and a year old of the missing ones appeared at the sheds one morning looking for admission. Their tracks were followed back and five head more of the missing band were found in a sort of hollow or coulee in the woods, where they had yarded like moose all winter. The snow was tramped down and everything eatable eaten off for a space of about seven acres, but the cattle were still in fair condition.

"The cattle had doubtless gone there in the fall, attracted probably by the special greenness of the herbage, and finding themselves comfortable did not attempt to make way through the snow as it became gradually deeper. Until at last when the feed became exhausted, and the snow softened with the thaw, the cow, knowing the way to the sheds, made a break for them. The remaining seven head are still unheard from, but Mr. Cust now has hopes of finding them all right yet."

—Edmonton Bulletin, Feb. 23, 1893.

John A. McDougall

Trader

By

JOHN F. McDOUGALL

John McDougall selling out his first little business in Winnipeg for a pair of mules, bob-sleighs and harness. John McDougall pouring over his Shakespeare, reading the master poet's works from end to end by firelight in his bare trading room at Prince Albert in the winter of 1875-76. John McDougall fighting his way across the prairies in a blinding snowstorm that clogged the rude wheels of his Red River carts as his small party pushed on to the Touchwood Hills and timber and fresh hope.

These are samples of the foresight, determination and strenuous effort he applied in securing a foothold for himself in the west—but are not the picture recalled by those citizens of Edmonton whose memories stretch back to the year 1908. They are more likely to remember John Alexander McDougall as a gentleman of dignified appearance and conservative dress, erect as a sergeant-major, striding down the street with the spring of youth in his step and swinging his ebony cane—a leader in both private and community affairs and to this day considered by many to have been the most efficient and the most enterprising mayor the City of Edmonton has ever known.

John McDougall's successes and rewards were not lightly earned. He was born at Oakwood, Ontario, about 70 miles north-east of Toronto, on May 20, 1854, the son of Alexander J. McDougall and Janet Cummings. Soon after his birth the family moved to Woodville, a few miles distant, and it was there that John grew up and received his elementary schooling. His father, a Highlander, was a tradesman and poor; his mother was Lowland Scotch, both were highly intellectual and staunch Presbyterians.

When John was thirteen, his father's death made it necessary for him to leave school and go to work. He started as a helper in a store in Woodville and a little later left home to clerk in Lindsay. At the tender age of sixteen, he was sent to a nearby town to close out a branch store, after which he clerked in Cannington for a few years. It was in Cannington that he met Lovisa Jane Amey, whom he later married.

Young John McDougall was ambitious, industrious and resourceful. Always on the alert for opportunities, he once answered an advertisement by a

railway company for a telegrapher. The job was offered to him but he was obliged to decline having no knowledge of telegraphy.

The year 1873 found Canada on the brink of a depression brought on by the delayed aftermath of the Civil War in the United States. The effects of the depression reached round the world to paralyze growth and demand in Europe and Great Britain. Canada's export markets for grain, lumber and timber withered away and all her industries settled down into a period of dreary stagnation. These conditions probably had a bearing on John McDougall's decision to seek his fortune in the west. Also, Manitoba had recovered from the fright of the first rebellion and was beckoning to the more daring young men of Ontario, John among them. Still only a lad of nineteen, he set out with some friends by lake boat for Thunder Bay.

In 1873, years in advance of a railway, Thunder Bay, the head of Lake Superior navigation was practically a tent town, a stopping place at one end of the Grand Portage, as the North West

Mr. McDougall is a grandson of John A. McDougall and has remained in the family business of McDougall and Secord in Edmonton. This address was given to the Edmonton branch of the Society on Nov. 18, 1959.

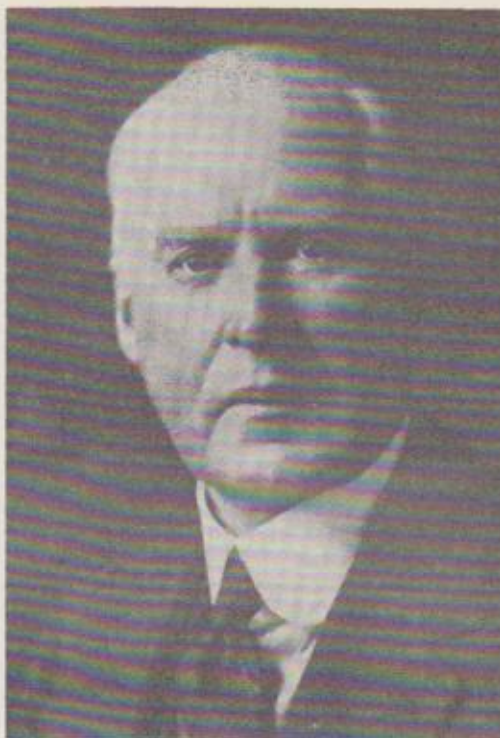
Company's voyageurs had named it decades before. Without money but with plenty of pluck, McDougall stayed there for a short time working as an assistant in a watch repair shop.

Before long, John, with a few newly made acquaintances, joined one of the parties making up for Manitoba. The route of the old Dawson Road was long and rough. It was partly over a primitive wagon road but mostly by rivers and lakes and the five hundred mile journey lasted twenty-eight days. So it was that John and his companions reached Winnipeg on July 12, 1873, put up at the Immigration Hall, and set about looking for employment, having worked their way from Thunder Bay.

The young men's first venture was the unloading of a flatboat that had come down the Red River with a supply of merchandise from St. Paul. A variety of small labouring jobs followed, but McDougall, being a good salesman and a good penman, was constantly on the lookout for something better. Soon he found a job in a government office doing clerical work which was more to his liking but held out little prospect for advancement. He was offered jobs with the Hudson's Bay Company and in the Post Office but each demanded that he sign long term contracts and this he would not do. He wanted to get into business for himself and be on his own.

Finding himself with prospects of no work all winter, with native economy and foresight, John went down to Kildonan College, now Manitoba University, where he could board more cheaply than he could in the town and at the same time continue his education. At this period he was not yet twenty years of age, although far from home and eager to test his own resources. The teachers at the newly established college were helpful friends of the ambitious lad and offered him much encouragement.

There are many kinds of ambition. John A. McDougall's was first to make a fortune and a place for himself at the top of the commercial world. To this end he was never content while on salary and spent years of unremunerative struggle as a small trader rather than



John A. McDougall, pioneer trader, later became mayor and prominent Edmonton businessman.

make a comfortable living as another man's subordinate.

On his return to Winnipeg from Kildonan College he took a position in a fur store for a few months with a Mr. Henderson, the founder of Henderson's Directory. At the boarding house where he stayed he became acquainted with another young man who also was dissatisfied with work on salary. John suggested a grocery store kept by themselves and his friend volunteered to invest \$400. McDougall was to do all the work of establishing it. Having saved a little money and being of good character, he was able to obtain sufficient credit to start the business. He secured a small building, twenty feet by thirty feet, at a rental of \$400 per year; for \$250 a carpenter put in shelves, counters and display windows, supplying the material at a high price for lumber then was brought down the Red River from Minnesota in flatboats. Even the preliminaries made the capital look sadly shrunken. To secure a stock of groceries, the young merchant ap-

proached a man known at Flatboat Sutherland, with a frank statement of the firm's financial position, and a generous supply was given to him on the promise of \$100 cash with terms for the balance. The goods were most carefully ordered and displayed for sale. Meanwhile, his partner, who had expected to receive the \$400 from his family in Ontario, was advised that the money would not be forthcoming. Both the young men had resigned their positions, their goods were on display and there was no turning back. Flatboat Sutherland listened to young McDougall's story of their disappointment and the genuine westerner said bluffly but cheerily: "You have the goods there now and opened up, it is better to let you have them and see what you can do. We'll take a chattel mortgage but we'll give you a chance." They took their chance and carried on a thriving business all summer, the autumn finding them out of debt and also out of stock. They needed capital more than ever. A large stock sufficient to last them until spring would have to be laid in before the river froze and the flatboats were tied up for the winter. The young men could not hope to do this, so John's partner, sizing up the situation, pulled out of the business. John made it known that he wished to sell his stand and when a purchaser offered to trade a team of mules and outfit for the business with a small sum of cash in addition, the trade was made.

Across the river at St. Boniface there was a man who had a lot of saw logs in a boom on the Seine River. He came to young McDougall, then the conscious possessor of a team of mules, the cash having gone to pay small outstanding debts. "I'll trade my saw logs for your mules," he said. "But your logs are of little use to me, however, if I can sell them, I'll make a trade," John agreed. He succeeded in selling the logs to the government for a bridge that was being built and now once again he was the possessor of a few dollars with which to make a fresh start.

During that winter, John A. drifted about, keeping eyes and ears open, and the most impressive things he heard were about the great unsettled country to the west. All summer the traders and hunters were coming in from the plains

to Winnipeg and the fort, and one and all were enthusiastic over the merits of their great country. Manitoba people in contrast were rather depressed due to the ravages of a plague of grasshoppers and an early frost. There was little inducement for the young man to stay in Manitoba and he decided to leave. With about \$300 which he had acquired he paid in part for a couple of ponies and carts and some goods. Then he joined a party of two or three other traders bound for the plains.

Twenty miles out they met a man coming in with a pair of oxen. The man and his ruminating oxen on the flower-spread prairie made a fine picture of pastoral and unsophisticated content. The man was at once keen to trade an ox for one of young McDougall's ponies. "Trade even," he said, "ox and harness for pony and harness. An ox can draw two or three hundred pounds more than the pony, and when you get to Carlton you can sell the ox for beef." The latter suggestion was one particularly attractive to the traders. Altogether, the stranger was convincing. The trade was effected and both parties went their way.

Next day John McDougall had reason to regret his bargain, and he seriously doubted the pastoral and unsophisticated air of the stranger. At every wet place, and there were many of them—the heavy ox was mired. The rich prairie soil yielded to the cloven hoof, swelled up and enveloped it, with a considerable length of the shank. But Portage la Prairie's chimneys rose before them finally, and there young McDougall went to a miller, one of the anxious heralds of the big milling companies of the west. "I have an ox yonder," said the guileless fresh-faced youth from Winnipeg, "that will be the making of a small fortune for any man who can fatten it. Now, you have the material for fattening it. Will you make a trade for a pony?" The miller was content with the bargain and Mr. McDougall continued on his way with a pair of ponies again.

At Fort Carlton the traders sold their goods in short order to the Indians for buffalo robes and leather and went back with cheerful minds to Winnipeg. They arrived there late in September but flushed with their first successes and

with the pleasant prairie life, they decided on a second trip, and buying more carts and ponies outfitted again.

In October, McDougall set out again for the prairie with a caravan of carts accompanied by two other traders named Clarke and Sinclair. Had that year seen an Indian summer lasting through the month of November, all would have gone well with the traders, but instead winter set in on October 20th. At Cut Arm Creek, somewhat west of Fort Ellice, they were met by a blinding snowstorm. The hard thick snow blocked the cart wheels so the course was directed to the Touchwood Hills where timber could be had to make sleighs, and after a hard struggle the party reached its goal. Once there they made a big camp, turned their horses out to scrape for feed, and themselves made sleighs with the roots of trees for runners. They stopped eight or ten days in the hills making these, then unloaded the carts, cached them in the woods and set out for the trading post. Luck was with the traders and they reached Prince Albert post on Christmas Eve.

They wintered at the post, John McDougall renting a small log house where he opened up his trading outfit.

To John that winter always remained a very pleasant memory. There was a fairly large settlement at Prince Albert

of sociable, intelligent people and the young trader also went out from time to time on trading expeditions to the Indians whose camps lay forty or fifty miles away on the prairie. That winter he found plenty of time for reading and read all of Shakespeare's plays. Most of his reading was done by firelight for he did not allow himself even the luxury of a candle. Those were the days in which people learned gracefully to do without for coal oil was three dollars a gallon, salt fifty cents a pound, and sugar, raisins and candles equally expensive.

In the spring he returned to Winnipeg and the following summer took up more carts of goods to Victoria, now Pagan, on the Saskatchewan River, north-east of Fort Edmonton. This was his first venture into the country where he was to become a leading citizen. By this time his stock of goods was of considerable volume and he was able to continue his trading throughout the winter. His life that winter was a new and strange experience and can best be described in his own words taken verbatim from one of his letters written at the time:

Trains of Red River carts provided the main means of transportation in the early days. This group was photographed in 1879.



"It is a funny life that I lead, so will tell you a little how it is passed. In the first part of the winter I had a man (a native) engaged to do my trading for me, but he did not suit me so I discharged him, and ever since, I do my own trading with the Indians, going out once or twice every week to sell goods and bring back furs. I sometimes use dogs and sometimes a horse. The way they drive the dogs here is to hitch them up one ahead of the other (using four) to a flat sleigh ten or twelve feet long and about one foot wide, one half inch thick. On this sleigh I strap my load and away I go, running nearly all the way, off in all directions, through woods, over hills, down and up deep ravines, across creeks and lakes until I reach the Indian camps. They live in leather tents, with the fire in the middle. The first thing they do when I get there is put the kettle on and make tea when we all have something to eat, me supplying everything of course. After that they fill their pipes and have a smoke, sitting round the fire tailor fashion, while I open my goods, give the men each a plug of tobacco, and commence to trade. I can speak Cree pretty well now, and so get on with them splendidly. Sometimes I don't reach the Indians the first night and so have to camp out in the woods, all alone; getting into the most sheltered spot, I cut a lot of dry wood and make a fire, then scrape the snow away, get some willows to spread on the ground to make my bed on. When my bed is made I melt snow and make some tea, then have my supper: it's very plain without any luxuries. After this I sit by the fire and think, think of you and home, the past and the future. This is very lonesome. Sometimes I am out this way when it's snowing and blowing, and so cold have generally to get up several times during the night and put more wood on the fire. Everything is very still except for the occasional howl of a wolf, or a lynx, or some night bird."

In the spring he returned to Winnipeg and took up more carts of goods to

Victoria. It was this spring, 1877, that John A. McDougall first came to Edmonton, driving through this post while on his way to Calgary with the Rev. and Mrs. Sinclair of Victoria, who were bound for Morley. There was nothing but a trail between the Saskatchewan River post and the Bow River, two hundred miles to the south, and the party ran out of food two days before the journey was completed. At Calgary, the Rev. John McDougall was building a small church and the visitors from Victoria, who were his guests, helped him shingle the roof before they went on to Morley.

That trip through the Edmonton country to Morley ended John McDougall's first connection with the west. His year's trading had been very successful but by the time he returned to Winnipeg with his furs, the bottom was out of the fur market and he closed the year heavily in debt. He was not dismayed. He still had plans and an unshaken faith in the future of the west.

In the late summer he returned to his home in Ontario and that winter he did himself well by peddling goods in nearby towns and villages on a commission basis. But by this time he was a westerner, knew the west and had faith in his own ability to recover his loss and make good with the help of the right partner. So on the 20th day of March, 1878, he married and accompanied by his wife returned to Winnipeg to make a fresh start. They crossed the lakes to Duluth by boat, from Duluth to Fisher's Landing by railway, and then by steamer down the Red River to Winnipeg which they reached May 20, 1878.

It was a hard and difficult year for McDougall and his young wife, but he made some progress and managed to pay off a little of his previous year's debts. He fully realized the value and need of keeping his credit good.

During the summer he witnessed one of the colourful events of those early romantic years. It was a gathering of five thousand Indians on the Plains, near Sounding Lake, where he had gone to trade. Chief Big Bear was on the war-path counselling his Indians not to take treaty. War attire was predominant. John and his wife were eye witnesses to the great council of war. Fortunately,



This frame store was built by John A. McDougall in 1882. It was located on the north-west corner of Jasper Ave. and 98th Street in Edmonton and went under the name of John A. McDougall and Co. It later became Hudson's Bay Company's first store on Jasper Ave.

the Indians did not accept their chief's counsel and they took treaty. McDougall sold all his goods and returned to Winnipeg for more.

During this summer he continued to operate from Winnipeg in trading with the prairie Indians and even considered settling permanently in Manitoba and opening a general store at Portage la Prairie.

By the spring of 1879, he had changed his mind and decided to head for Edmonton. John left Winnipeg with his wagon train on May 5th and his wife embarked on the river steamer for Portage la Prairie approximately one week later, so that they would arrive at that town at about the same time. They reached Edmonton by the overland route early in August.

An interesting incident en route is described by Mrs. McDougall in a letter written at Little Saskatchewan, May 25th, 1879:

"We had the honour this evening of having Sitting Bull's nephew to supper in our tent. He is on his way to Ottawa. He is a splendid looking fellow and well educated. Speaks

excellent English and is in every way a perfect gentleman. He has long black curly hair. He wears a deer skin coat, beaded leggings and carries a revolver at his side. He was telling us all about the Sioux."

John's first store was in a big log house on Jasper Avenue near 97th Street—the lower part being used as a residence, and the floor above for a store. There is an interesting comment in a letter written by Mrs. McDougall dated August 29th, 1879: "We have a splendid place, a nice store and house with lots of people around all the time. Johnny has sold \$2,000 worth of goods for cash since he opened his stock. The Treaty is the 10th of the month. He expects to make some big sales then. The Hudson's Bay Company are pretty vexed at Johnny. He is taking all the trade from them."

Their first Christmas in Edmonton was observed in frontier fashion.

An Indian who had eaten his family had been hanged at Fort Saskatchewan on December 20th, and it was not to be wondered at, that the whole affair was a subject of much conversation that

the performance of Colonel Jarvis' "colored men."

Construction of this new store building with living quarters above had started in the fall but it was not completed until the following spring. Business was carried on in these premises until the summer of 1882 when John sold out and returned to Ontario.

The business thrived but life was hard in those early years. In writing to her brother May 15th, 1880, Mrs. McDougall states: "I must try and write a few lines to mother before it gets dark. We have no light of any kind as there is not a drop of oil or a candle in Edmonton, and there is no sugar or salt, nothing but flour, tea and potatoes."

In a letter dated June 6th, 1881, Mr. McDougall writes: "I have one hundred and twenty-five carts on the road with goods for me."

Returning to Edmonton in the fall of 1882, he re-opened with the backing of Stewart and Bannerman of Winnipeg in a frame building on the north-west corner of Jasper Avenue and 98th Street, doing business under the name of John A. McDougall and Company. This firm lasted until 1885, when it was dissolved, and Mr. McDougall retired from all business for a year. The building subsequently passed to the Hudson's Bay Company and housed its first store on Jasper Avenue.

The decision to retire at the advanced age of thirty-one years was not reached voluntarily, and is best explained in another of Mrs. McDougall's letters to her brother, this one dated April 9th, 1885:

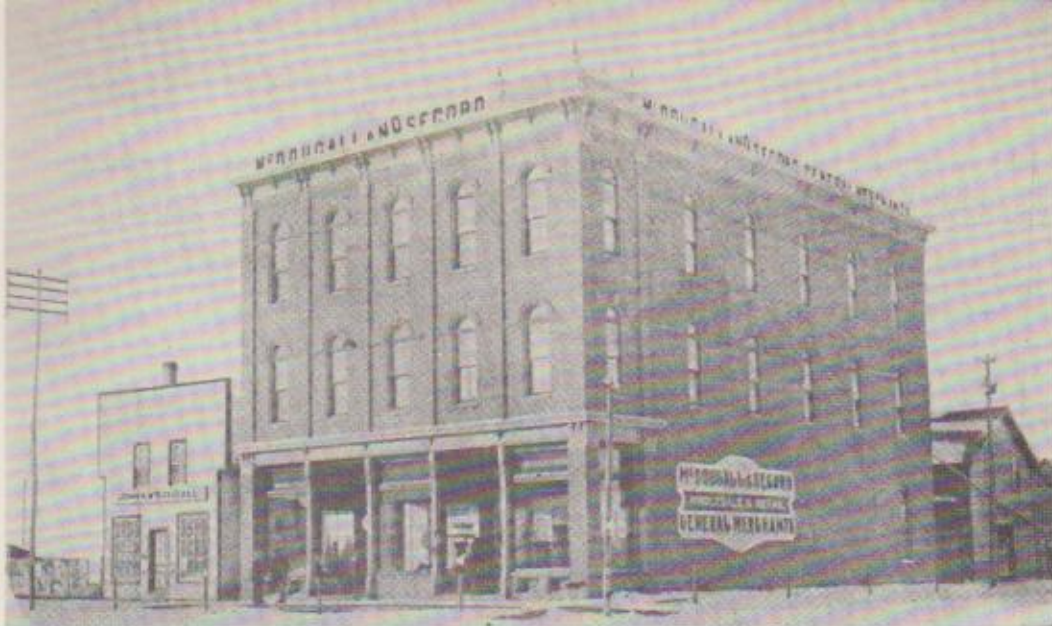
"All business and work is suspended here. They have raised a corps of volunteers. The corps is under the management of Mr. Stiff. Every hour in the day you see men passing with their guns. They have scouts out all through the country watching, and as soon as there is the slightest movement among the Indians, they will report and all will go into the fort. It is well armed with about fifty men stationed there all the time. George, our man, is cooking for them. They maintain a night guard of about eight on duty

at one time. Johnny was out last night from two o'clock until five this morning. Every citizen is a volunteer of course, and draws government pay and rations.

"The night before last two couriers were sent off for Calgary with dispatches for Sir John A. Macdonald, asking for help at once. They took different routes so that if anything happened to one, the other would have a chance of reaching Calgary. Johnny says that all the Indians in the country cannot take the fort so long as the ammunition holds out and I guess they have enough to last a month or more. It is similar to the siege of Lucknow in India. I have my trunk packed and am ready at a moment's notice to leave for the fort. Johnny and all the merchants here expect to lose all their goods and household effects. There is no way of preventing it. He says he will defend the store as long as he can, but against so many Indians it will be quite impossible to do so indefinitely. The storekeepers will then have to retire to the fort for safety.

"Fort Carlton was burned to the ground, Battleford is in the hands of the Indians. They have burned the industrial school and all the houses. The inhabitants are all in the barracks. They have killed the telegraph operators and repair men down the way. If the messengers arrive in safety at Calgary, we should have help here inside of two weeks."

By July of that year the tension at Edmonton had subsided. On July 30th, Mrs. McDougall again writes to her brother: "The *Northcote* came in Friday evening. Johnny drove me down and the captain took us all over the boat to see the marks of the bullets, made when it was going down to Batoche, and was nearly captured by the rebels. The bullet holes are all over—some went right through into the inside stateroom doors. The pilot house was barricaded with pressed hay and the bullets went right through that and broke the glass in dozens of places. The pilot had to lie down and steer with his feet. The clerk



Richard Secord became a partner of John A. McDougall in 1897 and the pioneer Edmonton business of McDougall and Secord was formed. Their store was a well known landmark at the corner of 101st Street and Jasper Avenue. This photo was taken in the same year the partnership was formed.

porated under the name of McDougall & Secord, Limited, to operate primarily as a financial house and mortgage corporation. Thus grew and expanded the business of Mr. McDougall's founding.

It may be truly said that John A. McDougall was in Edmonton at the beginning for, prior to his arrival, Edmonton was little more than one of the many trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. He was one of the first free traders. He saw Edmonton grow from a trading outpost into a modern city, shared in its good times, and suffered in its bad; experienced hardships and enjoyed the rewards of his labours. He was always prominent in its life and development—a loyal and worthy citizen! He played a leading part in the establishment of its civic enterprises. He was one of the promoters and an original director of the first Electric Light and Power Company to serve Edmonton in 1891, and also a promoter and director of the first Exhibition Company. He was a founder member of the Edmonton Board of Trade and an early president.

In public life Mr. McDougall was actively associated in all community services. For many years he was a member of the school, hospital and aldermanic boards, served Edmonton twice as mayor and for five years was member for Edmonton in the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta. He

was a member of the first Senate of the University of Alberta. As mayor of the city in 1908, he brought the street railway system into operation and introduced the automatic telephone system.

With but the rudiments of formal schooling, through reading and untutored home study, he became well educated. He was an outstanding mathematician and an informed student of world history. Without tuition he acquired a working knowledge of written and oral French.

The latter years of his life were spent in travel of which he was particularly fond. He visited many parts of the United States and Canada. On one occasion he made a trip around the world, touring extensively in Japan, China, India, Egypt and Europe. The countries of Europe were his allurements and to these he returned repeatedly spending much of his time visiting the art galleries and collecting art treasures for which he had developed a keen appreciation.

Throughout his life, he enjoyed the support and companionship of a devoted and loving wife, for whom any words of praise would be an inadequate tribute. That brave little woman too was a true pioneer—suffered hardships and privations but always remained a loyal and constant helper. They had three sons and three daughters.

John Alexander McDougall died in Edmonton on the 17th day of December, 1928, at the age of 74 years.

"Formed on the good old plan,
A true and brave and downright
honest man!
He blew no trumpet in the market-
place,

Nor in the church with hypocritic
face;
Loathing pretence, he did with
cheerful will
What others talked of while their
hands were still."

—Whittier.

GOLD IN THE WEST

"It has long been a fixed principle with men of enquiring minds that the precious metals are to be had for the seeking as well on the east as on the west of the Rocky Mountains, and the circumstances we are about to relate may or may not strengthen the conviction.

"An English gentleman named Sheffield proceeded last year on a hunting expedition to the Saskatchewan. He returned to the Settlement in the autumn with an Indian, whom he took with him either to Canada or England. Before leaving, however, the Indian told John Ferguson, a guide to the western country, and who was therefore known to him, that whilst hunting on the Mandell River, south of the Saskatchewan, in company with himself and his (the Indian's) brother, Mr. Sheffield found a large lump of metal which he supposed to be gold, and which he meant to test on his return to England. He further said that Mr. Sheffield had made handsome presents to the other Indian, who had been left on the Saskatchewan, to keep quiet on the subject, and that to secure his (the story-telling Indian's) confidence, Mr. Sheffield was taking him away. On his part, Mr. Sheffield said nothing about the alleged discovery of gold having hastened his return, but stated that he had been obliged to give up the expedition for that year, owing to his gun getting out of repair.

"People laughed at the idea of his going home to England to fix his gun and coming out again to finish the hunt; but such was, he declared, his intention. And such evidently is his intention; for he wrote by the last mail to a guide at Red River, instructing him to meet him with horses next month at Crow Wing; but whether he intends to finish the buffalo hunt or the gold hunt we are unable to say.

"The report of his having found gold obtained currency last Fall; but it was promptly contradicted, and a counter-statement was set afloat that this year Mr. Sheffield intended to bring out a party to colonise on the Saskatchewan. Be that as it may, the colonization party must not expect to have all the diggings to themselves. Their movements will doubtless be closely watched. We would, however, caution the people of Red River against the folly of pursuing a phantom, and remind them that even gold may be bought too dear.

"It may not be amiss to mention that when the California gold mania was raging, John E. Harriott, Esq., a chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, whilst residing in the interior, happened one day to show the Indians a specimen of the gold which had been found at the new El Dorado. The Indians shrugged their shoulders, and said if that was the stuff the white man made so much fuss about, they knew where there was plenty to be found of the same kind, and indicated Smoky River, 170 miles north of Edmonton, as the golden country. As a set-off, however, to any case which visionaries may be inclined to establish on such slight evidence as this, and also to afford another illustration of the well known motto "All is not gold that glitters", we may recall a fact within the recollection of most of our readers in Red River. Two or three years ago, Mr. McDermot found at Sturgeon Creek "a substance unknown, which he brought from the ground". From its close resemblance to that much-coveted metal, everybody here who saw it declared it to be gold. But scientific men abroad cruelly crushed their fond expectations. Chemists reject the theory at a glance. They found it to be not gold, but—oxide of iron!"

—Winnipeg Nor'wester, May 14, 1860

Modern History Museums

By

CLIFFORD P. WILSON

Most persons regard museums as somewhat musty, dusty institutions, that are seldom visited by anyone but tourists, and by people with very special interests. The suggestion that, if properly run, museums can become a powerful social force, one of the chief tools in adult education, may seem to you quite absurd. Nevertheless, it is true.

This fact is recognized much more widely in the United States than it is in Canada, and much more in eastern Canada than in western. The Royal Ontario Museum, for instance, has an average attendance of more than 5,000 people every Sunday afternoon. However, in the last few months there have been some very definite stirrings of activity in setting up museums in this province, and in improving existing ones. And that is an encouraging sign, because up to now Alberta has shown less interest in museums than any of the other eight provinces on the mainland of Canada.

It is true that under Mr. Manning's five-year plan, a provincial museum has been placed at the bottom of the list. But it is there. The City of Edmonton has also begun a movement to set up an historical museum quite soon, and I hope that the distant promise of a provincial museum will not squelch this excellent plan. After all, there are three main types of museums, and most Canadian cities of any size have examples of all three—art, natural history, and human history.

If the provincial government wants to set up a museum illustrating the natural history of Alberta—as the government has so admirably done for our sister province of Saskatchewan—what is to discourage the City of Edmonton from setting up a museum illustrating the human history of Edmonton and vicinity?

Perhaps when some persons visualize such a project as a history museum, they picture a collection of curios culled from a hundred attics, and presented to the museum in what the donors regard as a series of magnanimous gestures.

There's Uncle Herbert's fossil col-

lection, for instance, stuck about with illegible and yellowed labels, or simply marked with stains where the labels used to be. There's grandfather's collection of arrowheads, in a special glass case, all prettily arranged in the form of a cartwheel, with no information whatever as to where each piece was found. And there's quite possibly a piece of the rope that hanged Louis Riel—a rope which, judging by the number of pieces for which similar claims are made, must have been at least ninety-seven feet long.

Such objects, in the would-be donors' eyes, are too good to throw away; but at the same time they will not be tolerated at home in any place but the attic. So a history museum is the obvious place for them. Or is it? A lot of people think so; and they are mortally offended when a museum director who knows his business politely but firmly declines to accept them. For modern history museums are not high class junk shops. They are bright airy places where history is told sequentially as a tale is told, and where the present is as much a part of that tale as the past is. The objects you see there are things that our forebears—and even ourselves sometimes—made and used in an era that is now forever gone. Not only that, these objects are selected from the museum's collection and arranged in such a way as to tell an understandable story.

The original purpose of history museums was to preserve and exhibit any object of an historical nature, and let it go at that. They were looked upon as an enlarged version of the private curio cabinet, in which the objects were arranged hap-hazardly, with no thought

Mr. Wilson is Assistant Director of the National Museum of Canada, Ottawa, and was formerly Director of Western Canadiana for the Glenbow Foundation in Calgary. He is one of Canada's leading authorities on history museums and was longtime editor of The Beaver. Mr. Wilson addressed the Calgary Branch on March 4th, 1960 on the subject "Modern Trends in History Museums" but, because it was made from notes only, he kindly provided the Review with a talk on the same general subject given to the Knights of the Round Table, Calgary, on Sept. 16, 1958.

of historical sequence.

As time went on, objects of a non-historical nature found their way into the collection, and were tolerated there because they were donated by one of the museum's trustees, or because they were part of a private collection presented on the condition that it be kept intact, as a memorial to the donor.

Gradually, the word "museum" came to mean a storehouse of relics and curios, full of dust and mustiness, a place to be avoided except when one was showing a visiting relative the sights of the city. The objects were crowded together in poorly lighted cases, and explained by labels that were dusty and illegible. There was little order, either in the cases themselves, or in the museum as a whole, and the so-called display became an example of what has been well described as "visible storage".

I use the past tense here because these conditions are no longer true of all history museums. But of course they are still true of many museums in the United States as well as Canada. While museums of art and science have forged ahead, using all the latest methods of display and lighting and labelling, and carrying out their functions with originality and imagination, the history museums have lagged behind.

In a modern history museum the objects are well lighted, clearly and briefly labelled, and attractively displayed, with professional attention given to colour and design. More and more the competent display man is being called upon to play a major part in museum activities. When I completely reorganized the Hudson's Bay Co. museum in Winnipeg a few years ago, I asked the store's display manager to design each exhibit and choose the background color for it. And the result was positively startling.

For instance, the director of one of the country's largest art galleries was in town one day, and I asked him to come over and see the new set-up. He agreed—without enthusiasm. He had seen plenty of small history museums, and to a man of taste they were anathema. But as soon as he got inside, his eyes popped, and at once he became highly enthusiastic and vitally interested. That museum is the only one in Canada that has been given a full-scale illustrated

article in UNESCO's handsome magazine, "Museum", published in Paris. And that choice was largely due to its eye appeal.

There seems to be an impression prevalent among enthusiasts who want to start a museum that, provided you've got a building and a collection of objects, you can start. However, the most important part of a museum is neither one of these. The director is the first and foremost consideration. He is the professional man with years of experience and training, who decides how the museum will be laid out, and what sort of material should be collected for it. He is the man who deals diplomatically with the fossil and arrowhead addicts. And if he is wise, he will not be influenced by the social standing of the people who come bearing gifts.

Such a firm selective policy may make the going tough for a new director, and will undoubtedly alienate a few people who consider themselves eminently qualified to say what should go into a museum of history. Running a museum is a profession—not a hobby. One has to learn the art of telling a story by means of objects, just as one has to learn the art of telling a story by means of printed words.

I have a number of friends and acquaintances among the leading historians in Canada, but not one of them would ever consider himself capable of setting up a first-class history museum, any more than I should consider myself capable of giving a course in history. It is one thing to know the subject, but a very different thing to know how to convey that knowledge to others. But beside the museum man's task, the teacher's is comparatively simple. The latter's job is to instruct a class of people who have already shown a desire to learn what he is teaching by attending his lecture. The museum man, on the other hand, must first lure his "students"—as we might call them—into his building, and must keep them there by presenting his knowledge in an attractive way. Moreover, the museum visitor has made no investment in his "course of instruction" as the classroom student has, and feels no compulsion to remain a minute longer than he wants to.

Much more can be done by a museum director with a small purse and a large

imagination than by one with plenty of funds but little initiative. Personnel is more important than possessions. Or, to put it another way, it isn't what a museum has that matters; it is what it does with what it has. A modern museum is an active institution, rather than a passive one. It is not merely a showroom. It sets out deliberately to educate adults as well as children, whether they come to the museum or not.

By means of travelling displays, branch museums, and loans to schools, today's museum reaches a far greater audience than it could be simply keeping all its possessions in one place. Like the department store with a mail order business, it caters both to the people who can come to see the displays in person, and to those who cannot.

Number one consideration, then, is the director or curator. He can make or break the institution of which he is the head. Yet how often his appointment is not even considered until things are well along—until the funds and the material are collected and the building is almost finished. Only after that is some consideration given to staff.

Now the second most important person on the staff of a history museum is the display man—or woman. His importance is in attracting the public. Yet how many museums in Canada even consider employing one? The usual attitude is that almost anyone on the staff can be entrusted with the art of display—which is comparable to saying that anyone working in a store can put in a good window.

Museum windows are in fact comparable to the show windows in a store. And because people have become accustomed to arresting displays in store windows, most displays in what might be called museum windows are by contrast dull and uninspiring. A museum casefront should be a magic casement, opening onto a strange and fascinating life. Arthur Parker of Rochester, who wrote the standard work on history museums, observed that: "There must be something in the museum that seems to pulse with life, that thrills the beholder, that enables him to see that he is a part of history. Museums must not be dead things, nor have the atmosphere of a funeral parlor. We must so plan our presentation of history that we dram-

atize our theme, and make the visitor feel that he is one of the actors."

That is quite a job—a very particular sort of job, especially when trying to recreate this pulsing life out of inanimate objects. It is no job for amateurs, but it is one in which the good display man can employ all his art.

Perhaps you think that a glass case with twenty interesting objects in it is preferable to one with only ten interesting objects. Then let me tell you of a test made by a museum in Buffalo.

A display case was well filled with material, and a man with a stop watch stationed unobtrusively near by, to record the average time spent by each visitor over that case. Next, half the objects were removed, and the rest rearranged. The stop watch man again went into his act. And when the two averages were compared, it was found that each person spent about twice as much time over half the number of objects. In other words, each object got four times as much attention as it did in the first instance.

The museum can become a powerful tool in adult education if it is properly used. And if it is to get the serious support of the public it must show that it can teach children as well as adults. An appeal for the better education of our children never falls on deaf ears—especially at this time and in this province, where there is so much concern about the subject.

One competent museum man has said that he would never organize a museum primarily for visitors in the larval or school-going stage of existence. It is a false assumption that what can be absorbed with benefit by mature people can and should be presented and expounded to the young. But somehow it is hard to whip up the enthusiasm for the education of parents that one can for the instruction of their children.

In brief, if we want public support for the history museum, it is through the field of education that we must appeal to the public. And parents who take an interest in the museum because it helps to educate their children may, quite unconsciously, absorb a good deal of information themselves. So much, in fact, that they may become really interested in the history of their community and of their country. That is the end towards which museums must work.

Eye Openers



The following are choice excerpts from regular issues of the Calgary Eye Opener, which published from 1902 to 1922, and Bob Edwards Summer Annuals of 1920-22. Also included are some of Edwards' earlier papers such as The Alberta Sun, Wetaskiwin Free Lance, Wetaskiwin Breeze, and the Innisfail Free Lance. The figurehead from his "Eye Opener" column is reproduced above.

JUNE 25, 1921:

"Society Note — Mrs. John S. Lobscouse, of Bankview, whose husband is running for the legislature on an anti-Ginger Ale ticket, gave an 'at home' Wednesday afternoon to a charming coterie of booze artists. It is a wonder they were not all pinched."

OCT. 8, 1921:

"There are too many Canadian labor organizations controlled from the United States. Canada has recently had a humiliating experience along this line. An English orchestral conductor, engaged to come over with a revue produced by Trans-Canada Theatricals Ltd., was notified that he would not be allowed to fill the job because the rules of the American Musicians' Federation does not permit the members of that organization to play with a non-member.

"In other words, a labor organization controlled from the United States has been able to prohibit a British conductor from conducting a British orchestra in a British country. What, then, becomes of the Union Jack?"

JAN. 27, 1898:

"Wetaskiwin — A ridiculous rumor was afloat last week that Mr. Simpson, our M.L.A. (much lamented absentee) was coming up our way on a visit. It beats everything how preposterous rumors of this kind get started. The next thing we hear will be the Prince of Wales coming over to give a fete champetre at the Hobbema Agency."

MARCH 4, 1902:

"Mr. W. H. Todd has invested in a ferocious bloodhound. It is one of the most dangerous propositions to bump into after dark that has ever afflicted High River. When you are hungry, and want a nice cold bite, go and seek Mr. Todd's dog, and he will attend to you."

SUMMER ANNUAL, 1921:

"Society note—Mrs. Montague Macdooryboory of Seventeenth avenue west, will not receive Tuesday. Why not, goshonly knows."

OCT. 17, 1903:

"There is absolutely no truth in the malicious report that a file of The Eye Opener was publicly burned by the common hangman in front of the parliament buildings at Ottawa last month. Parties circulating this report, which is calculated and probably intended to prejudice the moral status of this paper, will be prosecuted. It is inconceivable to what lengths some people will go."

SEPT. 5, 1908:

"The Hon. W. R. Motherwell, minister of something or other in the former Saskatchewan government, on August 13 got the following off his chest:

"The Regina Standard quotes me as saying, 'I do not take much notice of the Standard.' That is true, I do not. But I would rather depend on the Standard than on the Calgary Eye Opener."

"That's all right, old cockie, but we helped put you where you belong anyway—on the scrap pile."

JAN. 25, 1900:

"Things are very quiet in the east just now. Molsen's Bank has not been robbed or buncoed for two months."

NOV. 11, 1916:

"Society Note—Bishop Pinkham, of the Calgary diocese, was down in Okotoks the early part of the week holding confirmation services. Superintendent Horrigan of the Mounted Police says he is unable to connect his lordship with the bank robbery."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By The Editor

PIONEER WRITING COMPETITION

After studying the numerous entries in the Historical Society's first writing competition, the judges have selected the first three winners. These are:

First—**Harvey A. Switzer**, Box 1360, Edson, telling of his reminiscences on the Edson-Grande Prairie Trail.

Second—**Robert A. Logan**, Lake Charlotte, Nova Scotia, telling of his experiences in surveying the 19th Base Line in north-eastern Alberta.

Third—**E. J. "Bud" Cotton**, 2022 - 27th Street S.W., Calgary, telling of an experience at Wainwright Buffalo Park.

These entrants will receive \$25, \$15 and \$10 respectively as the winners of the contest.

However, the quality of submissions in this competition was such that the committee decided to make a number of Honorable Mention awards. In some cases less than two points separated the winning article from some receiving an Honorable Mention. This made the task all the more difficult for the judges but was tangible evidence of the success of this project.

Those winning Honorable Mention awards of \$2 each include:

J. G. Niddrie, 9817 - 83 Ave., Edmonton, reminiscing about pioneer days in Eagle Valley.

Mrs. Henry Backstrom, Arlington, Wash., telling of her parents, the Karl Bjorkgren family, who came to Wetaskiwin in 1893.

John Martin, Rosebud, telling of early settlement in his district.

Mrs. Ida M. Reid, Rundle Lodge, Calgary, telling of her arrival in Alberta.

J. W. Christian, 4609 Ross Street, Red Deer, reminiscing about his experiences in the Red Deer River area.

Mrs. Robert Maze, 11105 - 85 Ave., Edmonton, giving the story of Columbia House, Edmonton.

Mrs. R. Shaw, 9015 - 105A Ave., Edmonton, telling of her reminiscences of life in a rural community.

John R. Kerr, 5125 - 38 Street, Red Deer, reminiscing about life in the Alhambra district.

The historical, rather than the literary

consideration was the main concern of the judges, but most winners showed a high degree of both. The themes were primarily on homesteading life although the areas and the types of experiences varied considerably.

The first prize article by Mr. Switzer is being carried as the main feature in this issue of the Review. It is hoped that most of the other winning articles will be printed in future issues of this magazine.

The overall results of the competition were most gratifying. A large number of entries were received and, while it was not possible to award prizes for them all, the Society appreciates the interest that has been shown.

As the result of this contest, consideration is now being given to the holding of further pioneer writing competitions in the future. It is possible that these would be along more specific lines, such as the most humorous experience, the worst storm, life in a town or village, etc. However, details of this program will be announced in a future issue.

Calgary Summer Tours

Plans are underway for a series of historical tours to be made from Calgary during the summer months. These will be open to members of the Calgary Branch, to Calgary Allied Arts Centre members, and any interested persons.

The first was a June tour on the 26th as a joint program of the Calgary Branch, the Lethbridge Historical Society, and the Willow Creek Historical Association.

The July tour is tentatively planned for the 17th, when a visit would be made to Blackfoot Crossing to see Crowfoot's grave, the Treaty Seven monument, and an archaeological site.

The August tour, tentatively planned for the 21st, will go to Rev. George McDougall's grave, the old Morley mission, and the site of Old Bow Fort.

Another tour may be held in September.

Details may be obtained by contacting any of the executive members of the Calgary Branch.

WESTERN BOOKSHELF

Indians of Today, edited by Marion E. Gridley. Indian Council Fire, Chicago. 232 pp. illus. \$5.00.

The feathers and paint which are constantly applied to modern Indians through movies, television and other sources, have been partially wiped away by the new edition of *Indians of Today*. In this volume, the native population on both sides of the boundary is shown in a modern light. Among the 162 biographies which make up the book are doctors, ministers, lawyers, war heroes, artists, and others who have made a successful career for themselves.

Canada is well represented, including Senator James Gladstone and Gerald T. Feathers from Alberta. There are also Canon Edward Ahenakew, Frank Calder (first Canadian Indian M.P.), Rev. Adam Cuthand, Rev. Peter Kelly, Gilbert C. Monture, Ellen N. Neel (the totem pole carver), Jay Silverheels (Tonto in the Lone Ranger series), and a number of others. All of these are treaty Indians who are providing leadership and inspiration for their people.

The first edition of *Indians of Today* was published in 1936 and Canada was hardly represented, if at all. We predict that before long, this country should be able to produce its own book of Indian biographies. —H.A.D.

Alberta Revisited, by Ken Liddell. Ryerson Press, Toronto. 234pp. illus. \$4.00.

Mr. Liddell has probably visited more people and seen more parts of Alberta than anyone who has ever attempted to write about this province. As provincial editor of the old Edmonton Bulletin he saw much of the parkland and bush country, and his past ten years with the Calgary Herald have taken him to every corner of the province.

The intimate knowledge of the present, plus a keen interest in the past, have made Mr. Liddell an excellent choice by Ryerson Press for his books *This is Alberta* and its present sequel *Alberta Revisited*. A delightful mixture of history and geography woven together with interesting stories of the land and its people, his latest book certainly does

justice to its subject. He has not taken all the well used tales of the past but has concentrated on the lesser known, yet equally interesting, subjects. McInnes' *In the Shadow of the Rockies* and Gard's *Johnny Chinook* followed the same path through Alberta some years ago, yet there is no feeling that this is a well rutted trail. Constantly turning off at such little known centres as Seven Persons or Amber Valley, Mr. Liddell unfolds a whole new Alberta.

The author has divided the province into four equal areas centred upon Red Deer. He often drifts unconsciously from one into the other, but this is inevitable in a province of mountains, foothills, prairies and forests.

Of particular interest is a chapter on the remittance men, which Mr. Liddell treats in a very objective light. He tells of their idiocracies and some of their amusing foibles but credits them with unexpected displays of industry and bravery. The action of many remittance men at the outbreak of the war caused Bob Edwards to comment in the Calgary Eye Opener that "they may have been green, but they were not yellow".

Other chapters tell about the early ranchers, the work of the Mormons in bringing irrigation to the south, life at Dog Pound, the Barr colonists, and many other tales of the past and present.

Mr. Liddell must be complimented for this outstanding book. He must have gone to a great deal of trouble to verify the numerous historical facts to weave them into the story of today. The result is a readable, lively account of the province of Alberta. —H.A.D.

Some Late Sites in the Oldman River Region, Alberta, by Richard G. Forbis. 48 pp. illus.

This booklet, reprinted from the National Museum of Canada Bulletin 162, deals with archaeological investigations near the confluences of the Oldman with the Bow and Little Bow Rivers. While technical in nature, it contains interesting data on stone artifacts, pottery, bone and shell objects which have been excavated. Dr. Forbis is archaeologist for the Glenbow Foundation, Calgary.

—H.A.D.



the EARLY WEST

The 36-page booklet, "The Early West," is published by The Historical Society of Alberta and is available at 50 cents a copy. It contains some of the best articles published in past issues of the Review, as well as some excellent new stories about Alberta's colorful history.

- Contents:**
- Massacre at Frog Lake
 - Tales of a Homesteader
 - A Mounted Police Adventure
 - Crowfoot, Chief of the Blackfeet
 - Medical Pioneering
 - Whiskey Forts in Alberta

Copies of "The Early West" may be obtained for 50 cents a copy (plus exchange, if necessary) from: E. S. George, Treasurer, Historical Society of Alberta, 9817 - 107 St., Edmonton.

**AIMS OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ALBERTA**

- To promote interest in Alberta's history.
- To publish documents relating to the history of the West.
- To encourage the writing of reminiscences and local histories
- To assist in planning and constructing museums, historical markers and highway signs.
- To help preserve historic sites and landmarks.